

Old Union Baptist Ministers School
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EVANGELISM

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We wish to explore three New Testament words which are contained in the title thought.

1) εὐαγγέλιον (eh-yoo-äng-gel'-ee-on) - #2098 in Strong's Concordance and Thayer's Lexicon: Derived from ἄγγελος (äng'-gel'-os) - #32 - "messenger" - transliterated "angel", or ἄγγέλω (äng'-gel'-ō) - "I announce" (a message). AND εὖ (eh-yoo) - #2095 - "well" (or "good" when used as a prefix). Thus it is literally the "good message." This word has been translated "gospel" 67 times in our King James Version Bibles and otherwise 10 more times. It is the message of Jesus' provision of his cleansing blood for the salvation of the human race.

2) εὐαγγελίζω (eh-yoo-äng-gel'-eedz'-ō) - #2097 (as above) - A VERB form of the preceding noun which could have been transliterated "I evangelize," but was not. We do not have a verb form of our noun "gospel," the usual translation of εὐαγγέλιον. We do not speak of "gospelizing" someone.

This word has been translated "preach the gospel" 22 times in the K.J.V. New Testament, simply "preach" 23 times more, of communicating "good tidings" of our Savior's coming 6 times, with 4 four other miscellaneous translations. Its literal meaning is to "communicate the good message" of God's special Savior.

3) εὐαγγελιστής (eh-yoo-äng-gel'-ees-tace') - #2099 is a noun which refers to special heralds of the good message, properly transliterated "evangelist" three times (and never otherwise): (Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11, and 2nd Timothy 4:5)

Ephesians 4:11 tells us of four categories of New Testament ministers of the word, God-called and God-gifted for that calling: Apostles; Prophets; Evangelists; and Pastors and Teachers (one category - a pastor MUST be "apt to teach" - that is, and able teacher)

Acts 21:8 refers to "Philip the evangelist." We will use the Biblical record of Philip's ministry of the word to examine the work of a God-called "evangelist."

A) He "preached Christ" - #2784 - κηρύσσω (kay-roos'-ō) - "proclaimed (publicly) or heralded" - to the Samaritans. (Acts 8:5)

B) "The people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake." - Literally "... to that which Philip said." What did he say in "preaching Christ?"

He communicated the gospel, the good message, by preaching (or proclaiming) it to them. They understood God's good message, believing with their hearts. Thus, it became to them "power (enabling) of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16)

A deaf man cannot hear a preacher at all, but if by some means the gospel is communicated to his mind, God's Holy Spirit can apply it to his understanding heart, so that he can repent and believe acceptably, and be saved by this means.

Acts 8:12 refers to the Samaritan people who believed Philip "evangelizing" (κηρύσσω - "preaching" or "proclaiming" was not used here) concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" being baptized.

What is more important than a big "revival?" One soul! God led Philip to leave the Samaritan revival with Peter and John and intercept the path of the homeward-bound Ethiopian eunuch, whom he "evangelized" regarding "Jesus" in his chariot. (again, *εὐαγγελίζω* is used instead of *κηρύσσω*). He communicated to him the gospel of Jesus. (Insert Archibald Alexander's experience?)

After the eunuch was baptized and "went on his way rejoicing," the Holy Spirit led Philip to "evangelize" (*εὐαγγελίζω*, not *κηρύσσω*) all the cities from Azotus to Caesarea.

Many years later, Paul visited in the home of "Philip the evangelist," who by this time had four virgin daughters who "prophesied" (spoke by the Spirit of God). (Acts 21:8-9)

Philip had been one of the first seven deacons, who were ordained specifically to relieve the ministers of God's word of the task of ministering to the temporal needs of some of the church. Was he already an "evangelist?" I think he became one afterwards! We know it is not unusual for deacons to be called and begin preaching the word.

Was Philip the first to evangelize the Samaritans? No! Jesus was! He saved the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. (John 4) This account is a most excellent guide to personal evangelism, one on one, so sorely neglected by our people today. Count the times and ways this woman tried to evade the subject and to throw Jesus off track. Study how he prevented each evasive tactic from being successful.

Who was the second person to take the gospel to the Samaritans? It was the woman herself! It takes a lot of twisting of John 4:39 to deny that "many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified ..." Many then came to Jesus personally, and he abode with the Samaritans two days, and "many more believed because of his own word." (v. 41) While women are never called by God as preachers of His word or gospel, they may sometimes communicate enough "good message" of Jesus for God to save a soul. We need to teach them that! Peter assured Christian wives whose unbelieving husbands were "without the word," that "they may also without the word be won by the conversation of the wife, while they behold your chaste conversation (behavior), coupled with fear." (1st Peter 3:1-2)

We need to also teach our saved children that they can testify and communicate enough gospel for interested souls to be saved. We must be careful to instruct them to be led by God's Holy Spirit, and to approach the task humbly, lest they say and do the

wrong things. (Tell interested inquirers what you know about the Lord and His salvation, and leave them in God's hands.) (Examples?)

Before deacon Philip became an evangelist, deacon Stephen became a "martyr," sealing his "testimony" (μαρτυρία [mār-tur-ee'-a] - #3141) with his blood. Nowhere does the Bible say that he "preached" or "evangelized," yet this μάρτυρος [mār'-tur-os] ("witness" - #3144 - μάρτυς [mār'-toos] - Acts 22:20) gave the most lengthy gospel message recorded anywhere in the New Testament Bible. As far as we know, his message won only one soul; Saul of Tarsus became the Apostle Paul thereby. His performance was a fulfilling of Jesus' prophecy in Luke 21:12-15 (READ VERSES!)

Does not Acts 6:10 say that the Jews who disputed with Stephen "were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spoke?" (λαλέω [la-leh'-o] - #2980 - "I speak") The assembled Jewish "council" (συνέδριον [soon-ed'-ree-on] - #4982 - transliteration -> "sanhedrin"), "when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart ..." (Acts 7:54) (literally - heart "sawed asunder" - #1282 - διατρίω [dee-āh-tree'-ō] - "I saw in two"). Paul was still troubled over his participation in Stephen's death until, while "calling upon the name of the Lord" in the temple in Jerusalem (Acts 22:19-21), he was told by God to put it behind him, thus revealing the meaning of Ananias' command, "arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16) No doubt Stephen's witness was his convicting message, although he "kicked against the pricks" (#2759 - κέντρον [ken' tron] - "an iron goad for urging beasts of burden") by persecuting the churches for a long while before he surrendered to the Lord on the road to Damascus. Not every lost soul when he is "pricked in the heart" by the gospel message (Acts 2:37) (καταρνύσσω [kā-tān-oos'-ō] - #2660 - "I stab or pierce") immediately and humbly submits to "what must we do?" as did the 3000 saved on that great day of Pentecost. Some react violently to the pain of conviction. (Neither preposition, "in" or "to," are in the original of in Acts 7:54 or 2:37 - both verbs are "locative" - locating "the heart" as that which was "pierced" or "sawed into.")

Thus did deacon Stephen win one soul at the cost of his life, but what a soul he was!

Another product of Stephen's martyrdom, and Saul's kicking, is recorded in Acts 8:4: "therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere evangelizing (with) the word" (εὐαγγελίζω - "communicating the gospel," not κηρύσσω - "proclaiming publicly") Philip, in the next verse, was only one of many who were scattered. Were they all God-called preachers? I think not! Many no doubt were.

Many were scattered as far as Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch, "speaking the word ..." (λαλέω - "I speak", not κηρύσσω) to the Jews in those places. Others "spoke (λαλέω) unto the Grecians," "evangelizing" (εὐαγγελίζω, not κηρύσσω) them also with the message of "the Lord Jesus." (Acts 11:19-21). "A great number believed, and turned to the Lord."

From the mission church in Antioch of Syria, preachers were called and sent westward to the Gentile nations - Paul and Barabas and their company, keeping Jesus' tradition of two by two (or more - to keep a check on one another). (Acts 13:2-3)

Did Paul really mean in Romans 10:14-15 to restrict evangelism to God-called preachers? NO! Not at all! Understanding of the gospel message is absolutely essential to the salvation of accountable human beings from eternal hell-fire. The churches must send the gospel to all peoples.

Who do we always send to such places, but a "preaching man" whom God has called? That is the context! "Whosoever (of all nations) shall call upon the name of the Lord (Jesus) shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

Stephen spoke the gospel, and so did those scattered in the subsequent persecution. Many believed thereby.

Paul reminded the Ephesian elders (qualified to pastor), as he left Asia for the last time, "I have showed you (ἀνταγγέλλω [än-äng-gel'-o] - #312 - "I tell, make known, or announce to) and taught you (διδάσκω [dee-däs'-ko] - #1321 - "I teach or instruct") PUBLICLY, AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, testifying (διαμαρτύρομαι [dee-äh-mär-toor'-o-mai] - #1263 - διὰ + μαρτυρέω - literally - a witness testifying what he knows first hand) REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD AND FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.."

So Paul told, taught, and testified publicly, and from house to house (privately - personal evangelism), the very substance of the "gospel."

Paul acknowledged his calling(s) in 1st Timothy 2:7 and 2nd Timothy 1:11: "ordained (or "appointed") a preacher (κηρύσσω), an apostle (ἀπόστολος - [ä-pos'-tol-as] - #652 - "one sent forth with orders" - in place of another [Jesus] implied), and a teacher (διδάσκαλος - [dee-däs'-käl-as] - #1320 - "teacher") of the Gentiles. In Acts 15:35, Paul and Barnabas, "with many others also," "continued in Antioch teaching (διδάσκω) and evangelizing (ἐνταγγέλλω) (with) the word of the Lord."

Paul instructed young pastor Timothy, "do the work of an evangelist, make full (proof of) thy ministry." (2nd Timothy 4:5) From the preceding verses, in both letters to Timothy, it is evident that Timothy was a pastor/teacher. Still he was exhorted not to neglect evangelism.

Did Paul mean preaching revival meetings at sister churches? I think not! Did he mean preaching evangelistic sermons before the churches he pastored? While this is necessary, I do not think that was Paul's intent. He meant for Timothy to take the gospel personally to lost citizens, neighbors, and strangers wherever and whenever opportunity could be found, thus setting a good example for every church member to evangelize also.

Was not Peter led to a Gentile stranger's house for an amazing result? Can we also be led against our traditions and prejudices in order to beat the Devil using what some of our own brethren may criticize as new and questionable methods? This example is personal evangelism at its best, God-led and highly successful, though apparently novel and untraditional.

IF "revival meetings," a wonderful 150 year old method, become unproductive of true revival and evangelistic success, what methods may we turn to? Only God knows what will work on this eve of Christ's return. We need spiritual "vision" enough for Him to show us what will work best. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18) Can WE be led to such successes?